

LEON RUSSELL

**THE MASTER OF SPACE AND
TIME'S JOURNEY THROUGH
ROCK & ROLL HISTORY**

BILL JANOVITZ

AUTHOR OF ROCKS OFF



Cover Courtesy of Hachette Books

**LEON RUSSELL: New Biography; Collection of Solo Piano/Vocals Being Reissued; *The Concert For Bangladesh* Winter 2023 Peter Jackson Multi-Camera Edit Coming
By Harvey Kubernik Copyright 2023**

Leon Russell (April 2, 1942-November 13, 2016) is the subject of a new biography. *Leon Russell: The Master of Space and Time's Journey Through Rock & Roll History*, from author and musician Bill Janovitz, published March 14, 2023, via Hachette Books.

The 592-page title is described in the book announcement as “the definitive biography of the legendary musician, composer and performer, a profound influence on countless artists, including George Harrison, the Rolling Stones, Eric Clapton, Elton John, and Willie Nelson.

“Leon Russell is an icon, but in many ways, he is also an underappreciated artist. A Zelig figure for a number of decades, he is spoken of in tones, reserved not just for the most talented musicians, but also the most complex and fascinating.

“Russell’s career is like a roadmap of American music, yet he worked integrally with English rock royalty like Beatles and the Stones. He played piano on records by such giants as Frank Sinatra, the Beach Boys, and Phil Spector, and on hundreds of classic songs with major recording artists. Russell inspired Elton John’s career, and Elton inducted him into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 2011.

“In his prime, Russell filled stadiums on solo tours, and was an organizer/performer of both Joe Cocker’s revolutionary Mad Dogs and Englishmen 1970 tour and George Harrison’s 1971 Concert for Bangladesh. Russell founded Shelter Records in 1969 with producer Denny Cordell, establishing offices and studios in Hollywood and eventually Tulsa, fostering wild and free atmospheres for musicians to live and work together.

“The book dives deeps and explores the personal side of Russell, who struggled with his demons, including substance abuse, severe depression, and a crippling stage fright that wreaked havoc on his psyche over the long haul.”

The litany of collaborators and beneficiaries of the creative worlds Russell inhabited were popular recording artists such as Delaney and Bonnie Bramlett, Rita

Coolidge, Dave Mason, Bob Dylan, Freddie King, J.J. Cale, Jim Keltner, Jimmy Karstein, Gene Clark, Marc Benno, Gary Lewis, the Wailers, Kim Fowley, Claudia Linnear, Don Nix, Mud Crutch, Tom Petty & the Heartbreakers, the Dwight Twilley Band, Gary Busey, Phoebe Snow, Bonnie Raitt, and the Gap Band.

As a bandleader, Russell was an early proponent of culturally diverse groups.

In *LEON RUSSELL: The Master of Space and Time's Journey Through Rock & Roll History* (Hachette Books; 3/14/23; \$31; ISBN: 9780306924774), shines the spotlight on one of the most important music makers of the twentieth century.

Bill Janovitz is the author of *The Rolling Stones Exile on Main St.* (Bloomsbury 33 1/3, 2005) and *Rocks Off: 50 Tracks That Tell the Story of the Rolling Stone* (St. Martin's, 2014).

A long out-of-print collection of intimate, solo piano and vocal recordings by legendary musician, composer, and performer Leon Russell is being reissued. *Signature Songs*, originally released in 2001, will be available on CD and pressed for the very first time on vinyl, via Dark Horse Records on March 17, 2023.

Signature Songs includes stripped-down and unique takes on songs from across Russell's remarkable canon, from the GRAMMY® Hall of Fame classic, "A Song For You," to his own classic hits, "Tight Rope," "Stranger In a Strange Land," "This Masquerade" and "Lady Blue."

LEON RUSSELL



Photo: CREDIT Courtesy of UME

Leon Russell, the former Claude Russell Bridges, was born in Lawton, Oklahoma, and passed away dying of a heart attack in Nashville Tennessee.

Dr. James Cushing: Leon Russell, like so many of the deepest Los Angeles musicians, came from somewhere else—Lawton, Oklahoma—and he brought all the blues and country western and gospel soul the Midwest holds with him.

“I think of him as a son of Ray Charles. On piano and as a singer, Russell understands Charles’s ecumenical spirit profoundly, but it is rare for Charles’s influence to result in work of such distinctive originality. Russell’s four LPs, made between 1969 and 1972—*Asylum Choir II*, *Leon Russell*, *Leon Russell and the Shelter People*, and *Carny*—hold up as least as well as Charles’s own records of the period, and in his work with Delaney and Bonnie Bramlett, Joe Cocker, Bob Dylan, George Harrison, the Rolling Stones, and the Concert for Bangladesh, he never loses his own lonely, honky-tonk identity.”

In late May of 1970, I glimpsed Leon Russell one afternoon leaving the Blue Thumb Records office in

Beverly Hills carrying a stack of his just issued Shelter/Blue Thumb self-titled debut LP to the Beverly Hills post office annex on Maple Street.

Very few people looked like Leon walking in Beverly Hills 53 years ago. Leon handed a box of albums to employee David Wolfe, on the dock, asking him to give copies to fellow workers on the premises.

I knew who Leon was from a 1968 *Asylum Choir* LP on the Smash Records label, and in 1965-1966 when I attended *Shindig!* music series ABC-TV tapings, where Russell was a piano player behind some acts and occasionally had solo spots. Leon was in the *Shindig!* band for the pilot episode in January 1963, until 1965, when Billy Preston took over just before the Shindogs house band was formed.

In 1970, I was attending West Los Angeles College. Wolfe and I next saw Leon Russell with the super-charged Joe Cocker-fronted Mad Dogs and Englishmen tour hit the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium.

For over a half a century I've been dialoging with a handful of musicians, writers, deejays, record executives and songwriters about Mr. Russell.

In 1961, singer/songwriter Jackie DeShannon knew the musical geography of Hollywood and was an omnipresent fixture in the area's clubs, recording studios and music publishing offices.

DeShannon, KRLA deejay/current owner of Pandora's Box, Jimmy O'Neill, and songwriter Sharon Sheely, who was engaged to Eddie Cochran before his death in April

1960, and later married to O'Neill, were Sunset Strip regulars. O'Neill hailed from Enid, Oklahoma, had been a deejay on Oklahoma's WHY-AM and in 1965-1966 he'd host the landmark television series, *Shindig!*

It was Cochran who earlier toured the mid-west that told the Kentucky-born former Sharon Lee Myers pka Jackie DeShannon to head out west to Hollywood and find a career as "a California girl."

In 2008 I interviewed Jackie for my book *Canyon of Dreams The Magic and the Music of Laurel Canyon*.

"I fell in love with L.A when I first arrived here. I loved the feeling of freedom and sunny weather. I came to L.A. already having signed a recording contract with Liberty Records as a singer-songwriter. I always produced my own demos, doing the arrangements for the songs as well as background parts for the singers. I believe I was a pioneer. Being a girl at that point who was doing both was practically unheard of. I was not allowed to co-produce any of my records in those days. I did, however, work very well with producer Dick Glasser who was also the GM of Metric Music early on.

"I did a few concerts at Pandora's Box. It was the happening place! I looked out into the audience one night and there was Rita Hayworth to see my show. I could hardly sing. I loved her movies and I remember being very nervous. Jack Nitzsche was there.

"The various clubs on the Sunset strip were just our musical neighborhood. I had a chance to sing with the best

musicians. The Les McCann Trio played at The Bit club just off Sunset Blvd. There were jam sessions on Sunday. Les would always call me up and I would song some tunes like ‘My Funny Valentine.’

“There were so many creative artists living in and around Laurel Canyon. The L.A. music scene was very special. The musicians came from all over the country and when they played together in the studio it was unique. They brought their roots with them.”

Leon, then Claude Bridges, met Jackie DeShannon in 1962 at Pandora’s Box, where he had a residency in the house band with fellow transplanted musicians from Tulsa, Oklahoma, drummer Jimmy Karstein and bass player Carl Radle. Jackie and Leon started dating around that time. DeShannon did sets, and, on occasion, Jan & Dean, Dick and Dee Dee, Bobby Rydell and Preston Epps would join the bandstand.

For over a half a century I’ve been dialoging with a handful of musicians, writers, deejays, record executives and songwriters about Mr. Russell.

In early 1960, future guitarist of the Everly Brothers (1961-1963) Don Peake, and guitarist Elliot Ingber, a 1965 founding member of the Mothers of Invention, were playing at the Sea Witch club and Pandora’s Box. Peake and songwriter/record producer Kim Fowley encountered “Claude” [Leon] and a pal from Oklahoma, [either Chuck Blackwell or Johnny Williams].

Don Peake: Claude had a soft southern accent. Kim was always deep in the trenches checking out talent. We went to an Italian restaurant on Pico Blvd. called Mama's, owned by the mother of the great singer, Timi Yuro, who was on Liberty Records. In 1961 she had a big hit single, 'The Hurt.' Later, in 1962, I really got to know Claude at a Phil Spector session at Gold Star studios."

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In 1988 I interviewed pianist, arranger, composer, songwriter and record producer, Jack Nitzsche. Portions were published in my 2004 book *This Is Rebel Music*.

Jack Nitzsche: I met Leon with Jackie DeShannon; she introduced me.

"Leon at the time was playing piano in a bar in Covina. He was an innovative piano player. He was good. I heard him on a Jackie DeShannon record. In those days it was really hard to find rock 'n' roll piano players who didn't play too much. Leon talked the same language. You could really hear Leon play in the *Shindig!* TV band. I put him in *The T.A.M.I. Show* band, and he's all over the soundtrack.

“During the Spector sessions, a lot of the time we had two or three piano players going at once. I played piano as well. Phil knew the way he wanted the keyboards played. It wasn’t much of a problem who played. Leon was there for the solos and the fancy stuff, rolling pianos. The pianos would interlock and things would sound cohesive. I knew Leon would emerge as a band leader.

“I put the band together for the sessions, a lot of the same guys I had been working with for years. Phil didn’t know a lot of these people: he had been in New York in 1960-1962. Leon Russell, Al DeLory, Harold Battiste, Earl Palmer, Don Randi, Hal Blaine, Glen Campbell. A lot of the players, and singers, like the Blossoms, came out of my phone book.”



Jack Nitzsche at River Deep Mountain High recording session, Photo by Rodney Bingenheimer

Don Randi: You've got to remember that most of the guys that were in 'Phil's band' especially were all jazz players and rock 'n' roll was a living for them. Larry Knechtel, Leon Russell, Al DeLory and I did loads of dates when we were the only piano players.

"You know what kills me, every time I hear Jack's 'The Lonely Surfer. I'm on it. So is Leon and David Gates. It still gives me chills because it's a great song."

Author Janovitz does a stellar job in his Russell biography bringing us into Leon's 1963-1966 studio

world work with Spector, Lou Adler, Gary Lewis and Brian Wilson during *Pet Sounds*.

Don Peake: As a piano player, Leon played rock 'n' roll. He kept it simple but it was right.

“During 1962 Leon and I became friends. I'd visit his place that he shared with [musician/songwriter] David Gates on Cahuenga near the Hollywood Bowl. Leon showed me one of his arms which was weaker because he had polio. At the Spector sessions, Leon and I would have lunch on occasion if there was a break between the afternoon and evening bookings. The musicians went to the Hollywood Ranch Market up the street. I'd play jazz on Sundays with drummer Jim Keltner and Jim Hughart a bass player in Venice.

“I had played with Mac Rebennack, who became Dr. John, years before on Sonny and Cher recordings, and a Moulin Rouge show. That's when Mac said his famous quote. John F. Kennedy had been assassinated in November 1963. Sonny came backstage, and we're all standing there. Leon Russell, Mac, maybe Mike Post. Sonny says, 'We've been asked to play for Mrs. Kennedy, and we're going to New York.' Mac turns to me, and he goes, 'Them politicians. The scurviest dudes on the set.'”



Sonny & Cher, Don Peake, Photo: Henry Diltz Courtesy of Gary Strobl at the Diltz Archive

During 1963 and '64, "Claude Bridges" and David Gates, were hired by the Ventures along with keyboard player Evelyn Freeman, wife of noted arranger Ernie Freeman in 1962 play on cover versions of "Telestar" and "Last Night."

Leon and David were then booked for *The Ventures In Space*.

In 1998 I spoke with the Ventures' co-founder and guitarist Don Wilson about *Ventures In Space*, issued in January 1964.

Don Wilson: For many followers of the Ventures, it's their favorite album. I don't know if it has anything to do with not using anything electronic. We had used keyboard players before. We had a steel guitar player, Red Rhodes, and he was absolutely great, and he put the first fuzz tone together. He owned a couple of equipment patents and he could play anything. But, using his steel guitar, and all the things he could come up with sounds, and all the sounds that we could come up with, and we tried, we accomplished, using no electronic at all. I think that impressed a lot of players.

“Guitarist Gerry McGee joined the Ventures in 1968 when he replaced Nokie Edwards. He's on sessions with the Monkees and Ricky Nelson. He was in Delaney, Bonnie and Friends with Leon.”

Toulouse Engelhardt: It should be noted that *Ventures in Space* was cut in the fall of 1963 and released in 1964 by Dolton Records was the first of the Ventures arsenal of music that featured the Mosrite 'Ventures Model' electric guitar only instead of their traditional Fender instruments.

“The sounds they created on *Ventures in Space* was so well received that Leon Russell returned to the studio later

in 64' to perform more organ work that embellished almost every track on the Ventures follow up album, the million seller LP *Walk Don't Run Volume 2.*”

Jim Keltner: Leon was the first record producer and arranger I ever worked with.

“I was very fortunate to have him as the first producer I came in contact with, because Leon always had a slightly different musical angle that he came from. I think Leon was always looking for something a little bit out of the box. I didn't know that at the time. Hal Blaine was there, by the way. I thought he was there to play tambourine, but in actual fact, Hal was there just in case I couldn't cut it [*laughs*].

“At the beginning of the Gary Lewis ‘She's Just My Style’ recording session, Leon said, ‘Don't play any fills. Not even one fill.’ And I understood that instinctively. I thought, ‘This is the way rock 'n' roll singles are made.’ He asked for a fill just at the beginning, and I did. Then he said, ‘Can you do that backwards?’ And I thought, ‘Oh yeah. I can do that. That's cool.’ So, I played the fill backwards, and opened the hi-hat in the intro. He liked that a lot. So right away, we made a connection there. During the playback, he turned to me and said, ‘You're gonna be a great rock drummer.’

“I worked with Gary Lewis and the Playboys with producer Snuff Garrett, and Leon Russell was on the dates,” reminisced engineer/producer Bones Howe.

“Guys like Snuff were song guys. Lou Adler was a song guy. I learned from both of them. That's something I

learned—you find great songs. You can't go wrong if you find great songs. There are interesting things going on in those Lewis records. Leon was very much a part of all of that.”



Leon Russell, Snuff Garrett Photo Courtesy of Gary Pig Gold

Gary Pig Gold: Leon was always, more often than not, just too quick to poo-poo his stellar sixties session work with, for example, Gary Lewis and the Playboys.

"However, his arranging work, not to mention octave-skirting, wholly pre-'You Still Believe In Me' piano line on a hidden little gem called 'I Won't Make That Mistake Again' - the B-side of the Lewis 'Help Me Rhonda' retread 'She's Just My Style' for all you keeping score out there - was in 1965, and remains today, my absolute favourite-of-all Russell lick. Although I'm sure it's just the kind of quickie riffery the likes of which the man could, and often did conjure at the drop of a downbeat, it demonstrates within a matter of a mere bar or two Leon's total mastery of not only the instrument at hand, but his innate sense of exactly what was needed to make a good song a *fantastic* song. It remains one of the greatest seldom-heard classics from throughout L.A.'s all-golden era, even if it did lay there on a Gary Lewis flipside."

"In the very late sixties, the music changed around Los Angeles and Hollywood," opined the late musicologist/author/songwriter and performer Ian Whitcomb in one of our 2012 interviews.

"Delaney Bramlett, with Delaney and Bonnie. David Gates and Larry Knechtel had Bread. Leon Russell as [a] solo—a case where he was a short-haired session man piano player on *Shindig!* Then you suddenly find him with this

long hair and this quasi-persona, this mysterious creature behind that hair and hat.”

Jim Keltner: And it was right at the beginning of the FM thing. FM radio became very popular, and there were albums to be played instead of just singles. So, a whole lot of things started changing. The music which was now being written more by the artists instead of outside writers really began to resonate with the people. That period is genuinely thought of as an unusually fertile time for great songwriting.

“In October of 1968 I got a call to sub for Jimmy Karstein at Snoopy’s Opera House, a little club in the San Fernando Valley with Delaney and Bonnie. At the time I was recording with Gabor Szabo and playing gigs with him at places like Shelly’s Manne-Hole in Hollywood and The Light House in Hermosa Beach. Then in February ’69 they asked me to do Delaney, Bonnie and Friends *Original Accept No Substitute* album at Elektra studio. Leon played piano on everything but ‘When This Battle Is Over,’ which was Dr. John, (Mac Rebennack). Mac wrote the song with Jesse Hill.

“There was a fusion of the Southern people beginning to play with the Hollywood cats. Everyone at the time was being influenced by that scene. George Harrison loved the Delaney and Bonnie LP when he heard an advance acetate of it and tried to get it on Apple Records. Delaney and Bonnie had tremendous magic and chemistry. I was playing with Delaney and Bonnie at

The Experience club on Sunset and Jimi Hendrix came in two different nights to jam with us.

“When I got to know John (Lennon) he told me he liked the Delaney Bonnie and Friends *Accept No Substitute* album. Leon is all over that. His piano playing on the ‘The Ghetto’ is the greatest. No one else can do that.”

Kim Fowley: In 1965, the Beatles started hanging out in Hollywood and Los Angeles with David Crosby, Peter Fonda, and the ‘Benedict Canyon’ type of people.

“Later on, George went a little further and began wishing he was in a band like Delaney & Bonnie and Friends, who became the blue print and the template for *The Concert for Bangladesh*. Leon Russell, Carl Radle, Jim Keltner and Eric Clapton.

“Eric was more American emotionally than he ever was English. George was the most American of all the Beatles. He had been to America and St. Louis before the band came to New York in 1964. George Harrison wrote ‘Blue Jay Way.’ So, he was the first Beatle to write a song about America.

“I saw Delaney and Bonnie, [Taste and Free] open for Blind Faith in August 1969 at the Inglewood Forum as the guest of Chris Blackwell to the show. I was the first white artist signed to his Island Records label. My 1965 record ‘The Trip’ came out on Island.

“Delaney and Bonnie were that kind of revolving door friendly Southern jam tradition. And in the final part of George’s life, the Traveling Wilbury’s.’ Who was in the

Traveling Wilbury's? Americans, along with him and Jeff Lynne. So that was an extension of Bangla Desh and an extension of Delaney and Bonnie.

“Remember what Delaney & Bonnie's single was? ‘Are You a Beatle or a Rolling Stone?’ So, there was that connection.”



Kim Fowley 1967 Photo by Henry Diltz, Courtesy of Gary Strobl at the Diltz Archives

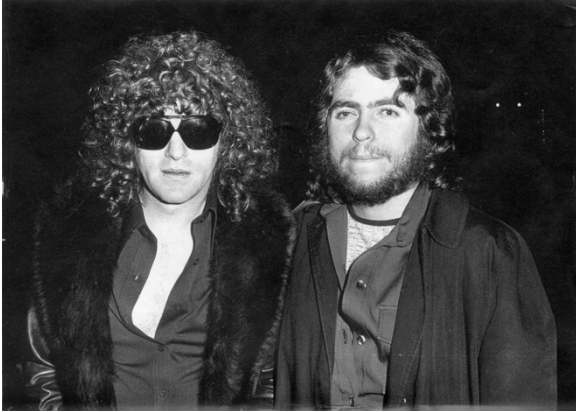
In a 2011 interview with Ian Hunter, bandleader of Mott the Hoople, we discussed the impact of Russell with Delaney and Bonnie Bramlett on him.

Ian Hunter: On our first tour of America around 1969 I really discovered and got turned on to Delaney & Bonnie and Friends, especially Leon Russell. My thing was Leon. That movie, *Mad Dogs and Englishmen*. Leon got a lot of slack from tour and film because people kept saying he was trying to put (Joe) Cocker away. I don't think Joe

was that fit and healthy at that time, and Leon was really doin' the business.

"The piano playing... 'In The Ghetto' was the first time I heard Leon. It was on an album. I just couldn't believe it. It was Gospel Rock. It was unbelievable. And I know where he got it from, like Dr. John and a couple of other people. But for me the style of playing. I went home and tried to do that for months. I tried to learn that song for months. I got near it but never got it right. The feel.

"When we started there wasn't any keyboards other than piano and organ. We didn't have these little keyboards that now can do everything. And if you wanted piano and organ at the same time on a track, you couldn't get a guy with his left hand on one keyboard and his right on another. You had to get a piano player and an organ player. So, then you had the piano and organ color. And then you had all the different guitar colors. And it was also extremely powerful. Like 'Ballad of Mott.' Some of those songs we would take 'em down to zero and all of a sudden BANG, the whole lot would come in. It was easier to put dynamics in and drama, and beautiful, quiet stuff too. Sustaining stuff. Some things a guitar can't do. It's just that fraction too jagged. There's a smoothness with a piano and an organ."



Ian Hunter, Harvey Kubernik Photo by Brad Elterman 1978

Howard Wolf: Jerry Moss, co-owner of A&M wanted me to help him with a tour that was just about to leave.

“He took me to the A & M sound stage and I heard some of the greatest music ever. It was Joe Cocker, Leon Russell, singers, background vocalists, and a great band. He said it was called Mad Dogs and Englishmen.

“Jerry said that Leon was to head the group, and Jerry wanted me to co-ordinate the group for him. Make sure they were all present and accounted for each place on tour, whether it be at an airport, hotel, transportation, or the gig.

“I worked closely with Leon as they were a very spirited gang, and after each concert, they went and partied heartily. The drinks and other forms of getting high were abundant. They wanted me to party with them, but I said, ‘I have to be tight so you can be loose.’ That was OK. with them. As the concerts dates went on, the partying never stopped, but my part got harder and harder. Leon came to me several times and told me how much he

appreciated what I was trying to do. Our relationship was not social however it was of mutual respect. Difficult at times as it was, my experience with Leon and everyone was one of the highlights of my career.”

Don Peake: The role of the background singer is very overlooked.

“Arrangers like Sid Feller knew how important the background singers were. It’s a color, a texture. Look at Brother Ray [Charles] and his use of the background singers, besides the Raelettes. He had the whole Jack Halloran Singers in the room. Billy Preston played organ on a lot of those sessions.

“I joined Ray Charles in 1964. I’m on his version of ‘Eleanor Rigby.’ That is a wild recording. It made me crazy, ‘cause Ray jammed all the words into the third bar. And the Raelettes are there. I was at the piano when he showed them the parts.

“On Ray’s ‘Let’s Go Get Stoned’ recording date, I was next to Billy Preston at the organ. I played the guitar solo. The background singers were also very evident later, in Joe Cocker and Leon Russell’s *Mad Dogs and Englishmen*. They even cut ‘Let’s Go Get Stoned.’ Then Ray Charles did his version of Leon’s ‘A Song for You.’”

Kim Fowley: When it came time for *Mad Dogs and Englishmen* Leon was better on camera than Joe Cocker. And Leon used that as his launch pad to be a white Ray Charles What no one had ever seen or heard of that idea

before. And he stole the [1971] M-G-M documentary movie [directed by Pierre Adidge] because the camera loved the bone-like structure of Leon, like Fred Astaire and Michael Jackson on celluloid. Joe Cocker sweated and shut his eyes. But Leon was more mysterious in the Leon cool and sinister skeletal profile translated to mystery. When you are thin you can never be too thin. And the camera agrees with you and then suddenly there you are.”

Jim Keltner: I played with Leon on Dave Mason’s *Alone Together* LP on Blue Thumb Records. The producer was Tommy LiPuma. I always loved Dave’s playing and singing. I also really liked the way Jim Capaldi played with Dave in Traffic. Jimmy Gordon played on ‘Only You Know and I Know’ and interestingly. I had played on Delaney and Bonnie’s version earlier.

“On ‘World in Changes,’ I got to play my ride cymbal that I had just bought from Pro Drum Shop on Vine. It was a cracked K. Zildjian that Tony Williams had traded in for a new one while he was in town with Miles Davis earlier.

“Carl Radle, Jesse Ed Davis and I had recorded some Dylan tunes with Leon as the Tulsa Tops which we did at Leon’s home studio in North Hollywood. ‘A Hard Rain Is Gonna Fall’ is my favorite.

“Later, while I was living in London, Leon called me and asked if I could come to New York to record with Dylan. We did ‘Watching the River Flow’ and ‘When I Paint My Masterpiece’ in March 1971.

“In 1971 I did the ‘Bangla Desh’ studio single with George Harrison and Phil Spector at Wally Heider’s studio 4 in Hollywood.

“That August we all did the two Concert for Bangla Desh shows in New York. And it spawned a great live album set that George and Phil did.”

August 2023 will be the 52nd anniversary of *The Concert for Bangladesh*, a pair of benefit shows organized by Ravi Shankar and George Harrison in New York City at Madison Square Garden that raised awareness and fund relief for East Pakistan refugees, after the Bangladesh Liberation War-related genocide.

It was in Los Angeles earlier that summer of ’71 when Harrison was alerted to the scale of suffering his friend and sitar teacher Shankar was feeling about the struggle for independence from the ten million East Pakistanis refugees who fled over the border from West Pakistan to neighboring India to escape mass starvation, hunger, and death.

Nearly three million people were killed. The crisis and dilemma were deepened when the Bhola cyclone and floods in 1970 devastated the region. At that period only

small funds and help were made available from foreign governments.

Harrison, Ringo Starr, Bob Dylan, Leon Russell, Billy Preston, Eric Clapton, Jim Keltner, Jesse Ed Davis, Klaus Voorman, Badfinger, Claudia Linnear, Ravi Shankar, Ali Akbar Khan, Kamala Chakravarty, and Ustad Alla Rakha were among other recording artists who donated their services.

During 1971, Shankar partnered with Harrison to produce the Concert for Bangladesh which raised funds for UNICEF.

“Ravi’s music was the reason I wanted to meet him,” revealed George Harrison in a 1997 interview I conducted with him.

“I liked it immediately, it intrigued me. I don’t know why I was so into it -- I heard it, I liked it, and I had a gut feeling that I would meet him. Eventually a man from the Asian Music Circle in London arranged a meeting between Ravi and myself. Our meeting has made all the difference in my life.”

Harrison addressed his own sitar playing.

“I’m not a very good one, I’m afraid. The sitar is an instrument I’ve loved for a long time. For three or four years I practiced on it every day. But it’s a very difficult instrument, and one that takes a toll on you physically. It even takes a year to just learn how to properly hold it. But I enjoyed playing it, even the punishing side of it, because it disciplined me so much, which was something I hadn’t really experienced to a great extent before.”

George went on to describe his earliest attempt at playing the sitar with the Beatles.

“Very rudimentary. I didn’t know how to tune it properly, and it was a very cheap sitar to begin with. So ‘Norwegian Wood’ was very much an early experiment. By the time we recorded ‘Love You To’ I had made some strides.”

Harrison put his sitar endeavors with the Beatles in perspective.

“That was the environment in the band, everybody was very open to bringing in new ideas. We were listening to all sorts of things, Stockhausen, avant-garde music, whatever, and most of it made its way onto our records.”

During 1997, I interviewed Ravi Shankar about the 1967 Monterey International Pop Festival and the 1971 *Concert for Bangla Desh*.

“I told George and George wanted to help me. The film *Raga* was ready and it needed some finishing in which George helped. It was released, I believe, in 1972. At the time, I lived in Los Angeles and had a house on Highland Ave. A beautiful Spanish villa and at that time, George was in town, and at that time I was planning to do a benefit concert for Bangla Desh, because I was very hurt that this whole thing was going on. To help this refugee problem, I wanted to raise some money.

“Everybody, every Indian, was thinking about doing that. And then, when I thought about it, I knew I could do more than any other Indian musician. Still, how much can you send? \$20,000? \$25,000, at the most?

“At this time of turmoil I was having, George was there. He came to meet me and I was sitting. He saw me. From 1966, whenever he came to town, we would meet. At that time, he was staying in L.A. for a couple of weeks. I told him what I was planning. You know, it’s like a drop in the ocean. At the same time, I never wanted to take advantage of him. I did not want to say, ‘Would you help me?’ But, somehow, it came very naturally. He was so sympathetic. ‘Well...let’s do something.’ And you know, that made me feel so happy. What he did, he immediately started phoning and booking things up.

“George phoned and got Madison Square Garden. Later he contacted Bob Dylan, Eric Clapton, Billy Preston, and a few of his friends. Somehow, it was done (snaps his fingers), like that. Within three weeks or so, we gave a performance and it was sold out. So, they had to schedule a matinee.”



Courtesy of Ron Furmanek

Pattie Boyd, George Harrison’s wife, inspiration for “Something” and Eric Clapton’s “Layla,” had witnessed her husband organizing the Concert for Bangla Desh talent in the Nichols Canyon house they rented in Southern California for the summer of 1971.

Leon Russell’s inspiration for “Pisces Apple Lady,” Chris O’Dell, also helped George contact a few of the musicians for the event.

“The first line of thinking from George was ‘Ravi has asked me to do something for him,’” remembered O’Dell in a July 2011 interview we had.

“That’s about friendship. That was more important than where it was gonna go. Even in the lyric to the song ‘Miss O’Dell,’ George had mentioned ‘the rice (that never made it) to Bombay.’

“George had told me about that situation earlier that summer. George was learning a lot from Ravi as time went by. So, the idea of a concert didn’t come up right off the bat. It came up later. Then it was, ‘would you help me?’

“And it was little things. Don Nix came into town. George didn’t know him. We all went to Catalina Island together. I knew him from Leon. From that came the background singers.

“I don’t think we had any idea of what it could be. I mean, it was fairly apparent that if you put a Beatle on stage, with a successful album behind him, *All Things Must Pass*, that it would probably draw people especially. John & Yoko did their things, but George hadn’t, and you make an assumption that with George involved it’s gonna draw people.

“George said, ‘I can’t believe this is all coming together.’ The whole thing just grew right before our eyes.”

Chris O’Dell also outlined Harrison’s own mission in securing Bob Dylan for the gathering.

“That was part of the territory with him for a long time. And, you know, honestly, if George had an idol musically, that was it. So, I think just having that piece there. George looked up to Bob in a way that there was that kind of esteem. And then the asking him to do something like that, and not wanting to let him down. George was really frightened by all this.”

It was well documented that George and Pattie had concerns about Bob Dylan showing up at the Bangladesh gathering. Although she was immediately relieved when Dylan arrived at the rehearsal. Chris O’Dell and Pattie Boyd were backstage for all the action and caught the second show in second row center-stage seats.

“It went beautifully,” expressed Ravi Shankar. “It was a young audience, especially because I had this existing audience already, who were mature listeners and who had come to Carnegie Hall. This audience was the same type of audience as the Monterey International Pop Festival, but they were very attentive and there was no problem at all.

“After our segment, I went to see the second half. Their program was very complimentary, because they chose the numbers that were very soulful in the sense that they weren’t hard rock. ‘My Sweet Lord,’ ‘That’s The Way God Planned It.’ Bob Dylan had his harmonica and did ballads. George sang ‘Here Comes the Sun,’ and the song he composed ‘Bangla Desh.’ There was harmony and it wasn’t so different. It went off beautifully.”



Ravi Shankar Photo by Henry Diltz, Courtesy of Gary Strobl at the Diltz Archive

Jim Keltner: I was right in the back watching Ravi Shankar’s set. The whole thing and being amazed and just how powerful it was. I had been listening to Ravi and Alla Rakha for years and here I was seeing them up so close I could reach out and touch them. Alla Rakha and Ravi Shankar were telepathic. They played together for so many years it was awesome to watch it. Ravi was at his peak in terms of technical proficiency. Alla Rakha was as well. It was dazzling. It is something that will always be with me. Between shows the hotel had an incredible hospitality room set up with delicious Indian food.”

For the two Bangladesh shows at Madison Square Garden, Jim Keltner is double drumming with Ringo Starr.

Ringo was asked by George to play and accepted on the condition “but only if Keltner will do it with me.” Starr hadn’t played in front of an audience in a while, either.

Keltner was asked to participate and he replied, “of course, but I want to stay out of his way. Ringo was a little on edge,” admitted Jim.

“He didn’t fancy playing alone and was kind of unsure about his playing. Which is amazing if you think about it. One of rock’s all-time great drummers. All you have to do is listen to the Beatles records, of course, especially, the *Live at the BBC*. Rock and roll drumming doesn’t get any better than that. Earl Palmer, Hal Blaine, Gary Chester, Fred Below, David ‘Panama’ Francis, great early rock and R&B drummers, and Ringo fit right in there with those guys. Listen to *Live at the BBC* and you’ll hear what I’m saying. Playing on Bangladesh was a really big deal for me. I made sure to stay completely out of Ringo’s way and just played the bare minimum.



Jim Keltner, Ringo Starr Photo by Henry Diltz, Courtesy of Gary Strobl at the Diltz Archive



Ringo Starr Photo by Henry Diltz, Courtesy of Gary Strobl at the Diltz Archive

“For *Bangladesh* there was only one rehearsal. It was in a basement of a hotel, or near the hotel. George was beside himself trying to put together a set list and trying to find

out if Eric (Clapton) was going to be able to make it, Where Bob (Dylan) was gonna make it.

“Plus, George was nervous because he hadn’t played live for a long time. He was absolutely focused and fantastic as a leader. Of course, he had Leon in the band and Leon really helped with the arranging and all. I remember that everything seemed to be fine at the sound check. and that I didn’t have too many concerns. When we started playing with the audience in the room it really did come alive.

“Leon Russell made it great to be there,” underscored Keltner. “I had played with Leon on quite a lot of stuff: Gary Lewis and the Playboys, Delaney & Bonnie and Friends, Joe Cocker and Mad Dogs and Englishmen.



Leon Russell [Photo by Henry Diltz, Courtesy of Gary Strobl at the Diltz Archive](#)

“Leon played on a lot of Phil’s great records. I remember loving the sound of the Garden. I heard Phil’s voice over the speakers, but never really saw him at the actual show, except during sound check. He was in the (recording) truck. Phil had his hands full and did a remarkable job if you really think about it. Horns, multiple singers, double drums, lots of guitars. That was his forte, so he wasn’t intimidated by two drummers and 14 background singers. On ‘Bangla Desh’, George was very lucky to have had Phil on that set.

“When George introduced Bob, I stood backstage, and Dylan walked on. Jean jacket, kind of quiet, the way Bob always is. Standing in the back in the dark, it was great to see Leon have the guts to get up there with the bass and perform with him on ‘Just Like a Woman.’ Leon sang a verse on George’s ‘Beware of Darkness.’”



George Harrison [Photo by Henry Diltz, Courtesy of Gary Strobl at the Diltz Archive](#)

“I was at the Bangladesh sound check,” added photographer Henry Diltz. His cover portrait of George Harrison graces the most recent *Concert for Bangladesh* CD and DVD.

“I did not leave the perch, but walked around with a crew pass, so I was golden. I could not have a camera in my hand. I noticed Allen Klein of ABKCO sitting in the audience just up the side in the bleachers with couple of chauffer goon type guys. He had a cane and I saw him point his cane to someone on the floor. ‘Who is that guy? Get him out!’ And these goons went down and escorted whoever that was out. It was someone with a camera. They had very tight security. I could not get kicked out. I watched the rehearsal.

“I already had been at Woodstock and the Monterey International Pop Festival. I got the sense something monumental was being brewed up by important people in the music industry. Not the people I was hanging out with. Sound check was kind of boring.

“The show was amazing. I was in the wings. Not lost with me was George Harrison introducing Ravi Shankar. I saw Ravi at Monterey and Woodstock. I was very familiar with him and his music and loved it. I was tremendously moved by his mood. This was an inside facility, and I had always seen him outside in venues.”

At The Ash Grove music club on Melrose Ave. in West Hollywood, Ca. in 1971, Phil Spector told a Bob Dylan Bangla Desh story to the adoring throng.

“Nobody really knew Bob Dylan was coming, including us, ‘cause he was out bicycle riding most of the morning. The funniest thing, we were all sitting in the hotel room and George said, ‘Bob, do you think...it would really be groovy if you’d just come out one time and do a bit of ‘Blowin’ In The Wind?’ Just turn them all on, you know.’ ‘Ummm, man, you gonna do ‘I Want to Hold Your Hand?’”

In a 1971 radio interview on Los Angeles AM radio station KDAY, Spector previewed selections from his *Bangla Desh* master tape acetate.

Phil and the DJ aired Bob Dylan’s “A Hard Rain’s A-Gonna Fall” from the concert as well as Dylan’s non-released “Love Minus Zero/No Limit,” left off the package due to vinyl space limitations of the period.

“Bob just came in right from bicycle riding on the day of the show. Bob just got up there and sang. It was probably the best performance he’s ever done. In my opinion the album is worth buying just for Bob Dylan. And I’m not just trying to sell the album but it’s such an extraordinary performance.”

Dr. James Cushing: George Harrison’s Bangla Desh tour takes it white suburban audience to Bangla Desh and then it takes us up to Watts for a while with Billy Preston

with 'That's The Way God Planned It.' His authentic mastery of the Gospel idiom and his willingness to find ways to work that Gospel idiom into secular music.

"Billy also made the Beatles be on their best behavior when George invited him on the 'Get Back' recording sessions. Leon Russell and Billy Preston had played on the television series *Shindig!* in late May of 1965.

"'Beware of Darkness' with Leon Russell and Jim Horn playing sax becomes more of a blessing. We have essentially an African-American gospel group with a British lead singer trying to get us into Hindu religious mythology. And this longhaired Oklahoma boy Leon draws a country western take on the whole verse. So, we have India, plus England plus religious devotion, plus Hari Krishna plus rock super stardom. Only in America. The cultural salad bowl and head on collision.

"The fact that Leon Russell's 2nd LP has 'A Hard Rain's A Gonna-Fall' and 'It Takes A Lot To Laugh, It Takes A Train To Cry' in that order, and the Bangla Desh set does those songs in that order in similar arrangements, needs to be pointed out. Russell's musicality anchors the 'superstar' vibe of Dylan and 2 Beatles; they are the steak potatoes and peas, but Russell is the plate and the table.

LEON RUSSELL
AND THE SHELTER PEOPLE



Courtesy of UMe

“Because two actual Beatles and a number of Beatles auxiliary members, Bob Dylan in the flesh, we don’t have the Rolling Stones but a very good instancing of Rolling Stones Dyanosian sexual rock energy with Leon doing ‘Jumpin’ Jack Flash.’ All three of the ‘60s royalties and

two of the forces that the '60s generation most bow down too.

“I do hope, though, that people recognize how important Leon Russell was to that Bangladesh band and to the rock scene during that whole 1969-72 period,” instructed the rock ‘n’ roll doctor. There was R&B authenticity as represented by Leon’s cover of Leiber and Stoller penned-Coasters’ ‘Youngblood.’”

Kim Fowley: There was no MTV then and everybody went to see the *The Concert for Bangla Desh* movie. And there was a new star. That’s what launched Leon.

“So, Leon was used to playing on Frank Sinatra and Gary Lewis & The Playboys session dates. He was always around multiple famous people because they all made records together. So, he was able to deal with a revolving door again policy of famous people. Because that’s what his day job was as a studio musician. He also was a singer. But he wasn’t called on to be a singer when he was a studio musician on all those hit records.

“The Concert for Bangla Desh symbolizes a pan-national version of Mad Dogs & Englishmen,” theorized Fowley.

“And if go back to that point, that is another extension of Delaney & Bonnie & Friends. It was George Harrison thinking of himself possibly in a telethon context. George

saw that idea and he took it to the next level. Because he was a Beatle who could think. Harrison was invisible when he needed to be.

“George Harrison’s Bangla Desh concert displayed Ravi Shankar, who is holy man spiritual inspiration for George’s ethereal escapades and adventures.

“As the Bangla Desh shows and the CD/DVD product and re-releases age, it’s like fine wine in a billionaire’s wine cellar who brings it up for the important guests. It’s the vintage element. In an instant-information era which is not flavor of the month anymore. It’s flavor of the moment; I just coined it. Flavor of the moment, there’s no fiber of backup. It’s, ‘Oh. Here’s something new, bright, nice and noisy.’ Now it’s gone for the next thing that is bright, shiny and noisy. And only in the past in pop culture do you go to something that has lasted forever. It is the European vantage point of old.

“Bangla Desh is now appreciated because it stood the test of time. As opposed to the latest phenomena on YouTube or Facebook that will be forgotten by dinnertime. And that’s why it’s good—because it is based on tradition, and tradition is something the new cycle is missing. And that’s why it’s worth checking out. If you were young and weren’t there the first time, you get to see where it all comes from, and it has a richness and depth of culture. And secondly, if you were there, it reminds you how much better things were yesterday. Because tomorrow is fast-food entertainment.”

American documentary film director and producer Saul Swimmer directed *The Concert for Bangladesh* movie produced by Harrison and Allen Klein, distributed by 20th Century Fox in March of 1972.

Swimmer served as co-producer of the Neil Aspinall produced Beatles documentary *Let It Be* in 1970. Swimmer, a graduate of Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, in 1967 directed and produced the TV movie *Around the World of Mike Todd* narrated by Orson Welles, and previously directed 1968's *Mrs. Brown, You've Got a Lovely Daughter* starring Herman's Hermits.

Apple Corps/Capitol in October 2005 re-released *The Concert for Bangladesh-George Harrison and Friends* on CD and DVD, celebrating the 35th anniversary.

In the documentary with the DVD, Eric Clapton said, "This will always be remembered as a time that we could be proud of being musicians. We just weren't thinking of ourselves for five minutes." Ringo Starr said, "The beauty of the event came across and the audience was so great." Leon Russell concluded, "It was just one high level of experience from beginning to end."

"George was a very important teacher to me at that time," reinforced Keltner. "Georgie. My friend, my beautiful and wonderful brother. And I read these things about him being kind of anti-celebrity and all that. I guess he had enough of that with the Beatles, so that the *Bangladesh* event seems

like a warm and wonderful cause that everyone turned out for.

“*Bangladesh* was a great little reunion. They loved playing with Ringo and me. Klaus Voorman was the principal bass player on *Bangladesh*. Phil loved the way Klaus played. He had a great way of stretching the time. Klaus is one of the greatest bass players I’ve ever played with. Jesse Ed was the only guitar player who ever made me cry.”

The live recording of the concert produced by Harrison and Spector ultimately won the Grammy for Album of The Year.



George Harrison, Bob Dylan Photo by Henry Diltz, Courtesy of Gary Strobl at the Diltz Archive

In winter 2023, look for director Peter Jackson's multi-camera expanded *Concert for Bangladesh* film that is currently in production.

The open-minded ears and doors of Leon Russell and partner Denny Cordell's Shelter Records in Hollywood were still in working order on October 24, 1973, when Cordell filmed the reggae band the Wailers in a closed-door session at the Capitol Records Tower studio capturing the group recording 12 songs.

In 2021 it was issued by Tuff Gong and Mercury Studios as *Bob Marley And The Wailers: The Capitol Session '73*.

It's another example of the unique A&R abilities of Russell and Cordell.

"Denny and Leon Russell were partners in Shelter Records and Leon spent a lot of money on a remote recording truck," explained Michael Ochs, the 1973 publicist for the Shelter label in a 2021 telephone dialogue.

"I was at the Wailers taping in October at the Capitol studio which was fun. It was like a big rehearsal leading to a real performance. At the time there was a dearth of originality. When this happens, the media tend to go to roots music, like blues. Reggae was the light at the end of the tunnel. It was important to promote it.

“At that time, I wasn’t sure if Toots [Hibbert] and the Maytals or Bob Marley was going to be the leader of the movement.

“Denny then hired me for the Shelter Records label. He agreed to pay a salary, an office and a secretary. J.J. Cale and Phoebe Snow were two of the artists I worked with.”

I really liked this well-written and thoroughly researched Janovitz biography of Russell, especially the revealing interviews with associates of Leon.

One essential voice, surfacing as a narrator, is longtime confident of Russell, drummer and percussionist Jimmy Karstein, who logged over a third of a century with J.J. Cale. Karstein replaced Jim Keltner in Gary Lewis and the Playboys, was in Taj Mahal’s band, recorded with Buffalo Springfield on *Last Time Around*, and toured with Joe Cocker.

However, I was miffed at Janovitz’s snarky introduction of Fowley. It’s also shonda he couldn’t comprehend the history of Kim and Leon in Hollywood, portraying Fowley as a villain-like figure in the saga of Leon Russell.

In 1963 Kim and Leon worked together on a single by Johnny C. & the Blazes, who were Musician Union No. 47 Hollywood members, later known as the Wrecking Crew, who played on "Inferno" that producer Kim Fowley wrote himself and "Ebony" which he wrote with Leon Russell, who was also the arranger for both songs and keyboard

player. The recordings were issued on Chattahoochee Records.

[Johnny C & The Blazes "Inferno" "Ebony" 1963 Leon Russell, Kim Fowley...](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IbUte7NDb6g)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IbUte7NDb6g>

One night in 1978, Kim Fowley telephoned me. “Schlep me in your ’59 Cadillac to Leon Russell’s recording studio on Magnolia in the Toluca Lake area this week.”

Leon had talked with Kim, who had a telephone call with Russell’s lawyer in Century City, and not, as described by Janovitz, “in 1978 Kim Fowley lurched back into Leon Russell’s life.”

I hung out with Kim, Leon and his generous and accommodating staff, on and off over a seven -week period in 1978 at Russell’s Paradise studio when these characters worked on the album *Americana*.

In 1977, Leon was impressed Kim had produced with engineer Earl Mankey, Helen Reddy’s *Ear Candy* album for Capitol Records.

Russell’s song “This Masquerade” had been covered by Reddy on her 1972 LP *I Am Woman*. It was initially the B-side of his hit single “Tight Rope” from *Carny*. During 1973 the Carpenters cut it on their album *Now & Then*, and in 1976 singer/guitarist George Benson did it for the

Tommy LiPuma-produced *Breezin'*. In 1977, Benson won a Grammy Award for Record of the Year.

“In 1978 I co-wrote seven songs with Leon Russell on his *Americana* album,” boasted Fowley. “Leon was always a very astute smart guy. Not only was he the white Ray Charles, he was Ray Charles and Scott Joplin. He’s a gentleman, scholar and human being. Leon was the state typing champion of Oklahoma. He had a typewriter on his keyboard when I did those songs with him.

“Leon told me one evening he wrote the song ‘This Masquerade’ quickly one night at the very end of a recording session and said, ‘I make solo albums so I can get covers by significant artists.’”

Occasionally, I would sit behind the Paradise studio console as the *Americana* LP was coming to fruition. During breaks, I would talk to Leon about his tunes that became hits by the Carpenters, Joe Cocker, B.B. King and George Benson.

Russell introduced me to Jimmy Mayweather, Steve Ripley, Gary Busey, and a fascinating Nigerian percussionist, Ambrose Campbell. He toured and recorded with Leon, who referred to him as his “spiritual adviser.” Ambrose baked delicious banana bread that we all devoured.

Leon Russell was not a fan of the Doors, Mothers of Invention, Frank Zappa, and Jimi Hendrix. One night he

announced to Robert Marchese, Grammy-winning Richard Pryor record producer and manager of Doug Weston's Troubadour (1970-1980), "I don't play any of this Jimi Hendrix stuff."

I politely nodded, knowing Kim had been very instrumental with Brian Jones and Jack Nitzsche in suggesting to Warner Bros./Reprise music executive Mo Ostin to sign the Jimi Hendrix Experience for North American territories.

Trust me on this one. And, "Don't Doubt Yourself, Babe" as Jackie DeShannon's song for the Byrds is titled.

Kim knew engineer Paul Buff, a mentor to Frank Zappa, from the early sixties who built a studio and recording truck for Russell, but Leon didn't give a damn about Kim singing "Help, I'm a Rock" on the Mothers of Invention *Freak Out!*

He did smile when Fowley talked about his 1960 records with then-partner Gary Paxton on "Louie Louie" songwriter Richard Berry.

Leon was very impressed when Kim hailed flamboyant singer, songwriter, pianist Esquerita who he saw at Capitol Records in 1959 or '60.

Leon preferred Esquerita over Little Richard. That was interesting to me.

A mutual acquaintance of Kim and I, poet/songwriter Stephen J, Kalinich did poetry readings at clubs with Esquerita on piano, who did his own set too, in 1965 when they resided at the Hollywood YMCA.

“Esquerita was a great entertainer in person,” praised Kalinich in a February 2023 telephone chat. “He was around when Little Richard first started, but was thinner, wore less makeup, big hair, and did a preacher thing on stage. Before evangelist Marjoe who did similar things with Leon in the seventies. I saw the influence Esquerita had on Leon when he first did solo shows.”

In 1966, Kalinich was signed to a staff songwriting deal with the Beach Boys’ Brother Records, and co-wrote tunes with Dennis and Brian Wilson. During 2003, Brian Wilson and Paul McCartney recorded “A Friend Like You,” that Brian and Stephen penned.

“I studied the country musicians Speedy West and Joe Maphis on the 1959 and ’60 local television shows,” Kim reminded me in a studio conversation.

“[They] appeared weekly on *The Spade Cooley Show* and *Cal’s Corral*, that car salesman Cal Worthington hosted. Everyone would go on *Town Hall Party*. I saw Eddie Cochran, Gene Vincent, Johnny Cash and Molly Bee on that show. Leon was on *Cal’s Corral*.

“In 1960 Gary Paxton and I produced the Miss Bonnie Owens record ‘Just For The Children’s Sake’ for the Global label, a subsidiary of Del-Fi Records. It earned Best New Female Country Artist of The Year from *Billboard* magazine. We cut it in Bakersfield. Songwriter Harland Howard came to the session. Gordon Terry, Guy French, Don Markham and Ray Moody were on it. She was married to Buck Owens and later Merle Haggard.

“The Arvee label put out a record I did with Alexander the Great, which featured guitarist James Burton and guys from Dale Hawkins’ ‘Suzy Q’ band.”

Leon and Kim praised Jimmy Bowen, a staff producer for Frank Sinatra’s Reprise label. Bowen had invited Fowley to a 1965 Frank Sinatra session at United Western where “Russell Bridges” played piano on a track. Kim pinpointed the action to Leon and I.

“Frank arrived with ‘two guys.’ He handed them his overcoat, went up to the microphone, did one take and put his coat back on and left.”

In 1978 I did some work with Bowen for a week when we were both at MCA Records. One night we caught Joe Ely at The Palomino club.

Leon collected people and appeared to have somewhat of an open-door policy with newcomers, unlike so many stars I’ve encountered over the last half century.

We talked about Tom Petty, who he and former partner Denny Cordell had discovered and inked for their Shelter Records label.

Leon was impressed that in my 1977-1978 job at MCA Records as West Coast A&R director, I paired Petty with engineer-turned-record producer Jimmy Iovine that resulted in *Damn The Torpedoes*. He laughed, when I remarked, “I was just continuing what you and Cordell started...”

That same year I initiated the Tom Petty & the Heartbreakers-produced Del Shannon *Drop Down and Get Me*, and received a credit, Organic Catalyst.

In 1977 I introduced Tom to Carl Perkins at a party I threw at Jet Records in Century City. Tom was very appreciative. *Zoo World* magazine subsequently published a photo of them together.

When I asked Leon about making records, he mused, “If you don’t have a good voice put it up front in the mix.”

I praised “Superstar” to Russell which he penned with Bonnie Bramlett, initially sung by Rita Coolidge on the Mad Dogs and Englishmen tour. I liked the Carpenters’ version, but lamented to Leon their change in lyric, “sleep with you again,” to “be with you again.” “Radio airplay,” quipped Russell.

I quizzed Leon about the influential Los Angeles band Love, headed by Johnny Echols and Arthur Lee. He confirmed some tracking and overdubbing on their *Forever Changes* was done at an earlier home studio of his in 1967 after *Forever Changes* engineer/co-producer Bruce Botnick had recorded Love at Sunset Sound.

In 1963 it was Fowley who steered nascent songwriter Lee, then living with his mother in the West Adams district, attending Dorsey High School, to Capitol Records to hear his Booker T. and the MG’s inspired band, the LAGs. The label released their instrumental single “The Ninth Wave.”

“Psychedelic and R&B music co-existed in L.A. 1966-1969, and especially Hollywood, in the Summer of Love 1967,” underscored Kim to me in a 2007 interview.

R2-565276



Courtesy of Rhino

“The band Love, with Arthur and guitarist Johnny Echols, who was also the arranger, was unique because they were people who went beyond black stereotype for their influences and inspirations. They weren’t an R&B band. They didn’t play the Apollo in New York or the Regal Theater in Chicago. These guys had white girl friends and

drove Porches on Sunset Blvd. Vocally, Arthur Lee was Bob Dylan with melody. Bryan MacLean was very talented. He couldn't compete. He was George Harrison to Arthur, who was Lennon and McCartney at the same time, and Jimi Hendrix, too.

“Booker T. Jones of the MG's was like Keith Richards and Leon Russell: He knew what to leave out. Black music is what you leave out. You can catch your listener in the holes that you allow and everyone falls into.”

In 2016, Booker T. Jones issued a personal statement about Leon Russell.

“RIP my friend of 50 years, generous trail blazer, Leon Russell, who rescued me and remained a gentleman throughout Hollywood's trials.”

One evening during an *Americana* session, Kim invited multi-instrumentalist Chris Darrow and Bruce Gary, drummer of the Knack, to visit Leon's studio.

Somehow the topic of polio came up, and how an illness or accident effected musical abilities, let alone life and mobility issues.

Leon had an upper spine birth injury and partially paralyzed on his right side, resulting in a spastic nerve condition akin to polio which affected limbs and a few fingers on one hand. His other hand became dominant, contributing to his unique piano style.

Kim was a two-time polio survivor with a limp leg. One of the reasons he didn't drive. Both Darrow and Gary

endured the plight of childhood polio impacting their muscular skeletal system to play musical instruments. Darrow, like Russell, had spent a year trying to re-learn how to comfortably hold a guitar pick in their hands.

Even when the topic of *Shindig!* came up, Leon said series producer, an Englishman Jack Good, wanted to accent his limp for telegenic purposes. Good was an Oxford graduate and viewed rock 'n' roll as a dramatic subject.

Listening to these music business veterans and their wry wisdom over dinner a few times, mostly ordering in, often ending with fresh hot Famous Amos Cookies at midnight, or noshing at local coffee shop in North Hollywood on Lankershim, was a very educational and inspirational experience.

Janovitz also diminished Fowley's lyrical contributions to *Americana*.

He writes, "‘Elvis and Marilyn’ was released as a single. It's the musical equivalent of dorm room posters of Presley and Monroe as characters in Edward Hopper's *Nighthawks* painting. It qualifies as one of the worst songs to feature Leon Russell's name in the credits."

Kim Fowley: One time, Leon and I were discussing Elvis Presley and Marilyn Monroe, and with Dyan Diamond, we wrote 'Elvis and Marilyn.' Marty Balin of Jefferson Airplane loved our recording, and then cut it on his EMI Records solo album. I had introduced Leon to Dyan, and

they wrote ‘Housewife’ for the *Americana* album, later done by Wayne Newton.”

In 1962, Russell played on Newton’s “Danke Shoen” at Capitol Studios.

In 2015, at the Grammy Museum in Los Angeles, *An Evening with Marty Balin*, I interviewed Marty, who greeted with me singing a lyric from “Elvis and Marilyn.” He praised the tune, and gave songwriting kudos to Leon and Kim.

Russell and Fowley always had a keen understanding of subject matter, topical tunes and unique but commercial themes in their songwriting efforts.

With “Elvis and Marilyn,” Leon and Kim reminded us again about pop icons Presley and Monroe in 1978, who in year 2023 were still ripe subject matter. Actress Ana de Armas received a Best Actress Academy Award Nomination for her turn as Marilyn Monroe in Netflix movie *Blonde*, while Austin Butler earned a Best Actor Academy Award nomination for the Warner Bros. feature *ELVIS*.

At the Grammy Museum, Marty chuckled about a 1962 evening with Kim in Hollywood and happily discussed his first recording session in 1962 at Gold Star studios for the L.A -based Challenge Records label, distributed by Warner Bros. It was a single he co-wrote, “I Specialize in Love.” [On the Jimmie Haskell-produced track were Glen Campbell, Barney Kessel, bassist Red Callender, drummer

Earl Palmer, Jack Nitzsche on keyboards, vibist Milt Jackson, and background singers, the Blossoms].

In November 1966, Marty bumped into Fowley at RCA Victor studios on Sunset Bl. in Hollywood. Jefferson Airplane were doing *Surrealistic Pillow*, Balin had just written “Comin Back to Me.”

“I left the RCA studios in Hollywood and went back to the motel I ran into the Paul Butterfield Blues Band. Paul had this joint and gave it to me. ‘Smoke this, Marty. It’s the best stuff you’ll ever smoke.’ So, I did. And I was in my room and I tell you, I couldn’t find my legs. I got up and went to the guitar. Bam! In five minutes that song came out. So, I ran back to the studio.”

“I loved Marty Balin in the Jefferson Airplane,” touted Fowley in our 2007 interview. “He was the soul of the band. Examine the recordings they did over 1967, and the songs he wrote then.”



Marty Balin Photo: Henry Diltz

In his study of Leon Russell, Janovitz failed to truly capture Fowley's personal and music business interactions with Leon, and beneficial recording connections and introductions Kim provided to Russell during *Americana*.

When I was in the studio, it was quite evident Leon had peer-to-peer respect for Kim as a songwriter, music publisher, talent scout and business acumen, a built-in narrative that Janovitz should have considered investigating deeper in his absorbing portrait of Russell.

In fact, Leon signed Kim's driver/lyricist/Comedy Store worker Scott Goddard to a staff writer job with his publishing company, Teddy Jack Music, and made him a salaried employee for two years.

Scott provided much more to Leon in his Paradise setting, and not "pretty much there for comic relief," as quoted in the book.

Scott penned tunes for the Dickies and Surf Punks which Fowley's music publishing company administered.

Leon even played piano, with Jim Mankey on guitar, for a recording written and sung by Scott Goddard "Calling All Girls" for an album I was producing.

Scott brought the Surf Punks over to Leon's studio. Russell was fascinated by their Dennis Dragon-directed videos. Leon declared, "They're the next Monkees!"

Before he passed away, Scott Goddard divulged to guitarist/songwriter, and *Flipside* magazine co-founder, Pat DiPuccio, "the first five songs I wrote all got covered!"

In 1984 Goddard released an EP, and in 1986, a solo album.

Fowley also suggested to Russell the possibility of hiring his friend, arranger/songwriter/composer and conductor Rick Henn for some arranging duties. Henn was a founding member of the Sun Rays and penned their chart hits, “I Live for the Sun” and “Andrea.” Kim had worked with Henn earlier in the Renegades show band.

In 1969, Rick and Brian Wilson co-wrote “Soulful Old Man Sunshine” for the Beach Boys. It was released on the Beach Boys’ *Endless Harmony* album, and an outtake of their composition was housed in 2021’s *Feel Flows* box set.

Kim championed Rick’s career where he learned from Motown legend Mickey Stevenson, Journeyman arranger Don Ralke, and composer/conductor Carmen Dragon, the conductor of the Hollywood Bowl and the Glendale Symphony Orchestra.

Fowley had utilized Henn on his 1977 production of Helen Reddy’s *Ear Candy* album to arrange some tracks and co-write tunes with Helen.

“Kim reached out to me and said ‘Come over to Leon’s studio,” reminisced Henn in a February 2023 telephone conversation.

“It was a cosmic encounter. The first thing Leon did when I walked in the studio was point at the piano and said, ‘blow my mind.’ I played him a tune, '(We’re such a) Good Combination,' and the band and I then cut the track in the studio with [Leon’s wife] Mary Russell. I co-wrote it with my wife Kathy.

“Leon and I then talked for a very long time deep into the night. He told me about his trip to Africa. I left his studio at dawn.”

Subsequently, Henn became the music director/composer/conductor of the Laguna Beach-based Festival of Arts and Pageant of the Masters held in summer seasons in the Irvine Bowl.

Another Fowley discovery, invited to Paradise studio, was budding songwriter Tom Johnson aka Tommy Knight, who would co-write “Body Music” with Mary Russell, for her solo release issued on Leon’s Paradise/Warner Bros. label. The record is co-published by Fowley’s Rare Magnetism Music and Leon’s Teddy Jack Music. In 1979 “Body Music” was a top pick in weekly music periodicals *Billboard* and *Cash Box*.

In 1981, former UNI Records talent scout/MCA Vice-President and 20th Century Records President Russ Regan

signed Knight to an album deal on his imprint label distributed by Columbia Records.

Kim, Leon and I talked about Brian Wilson, *Pet Sounds* and the “Wouldn’t It Be Nice” guitarists Glen Campbell and Barney Kessel.

Pianist Russell and Kessel were on the Byrds’ “Mr. Tambourine Man” session.



Barney Kessel Photo ©Cave Hollywood

Fowley told Leon he knew the multi-instrumentalists Dan and David Kessel, the sons of guitarist/producer and jazz legend, Barney Kessel. They were second generation first-call Wrecking Crew musicians who played on Phil Spector-produced recordings of Cher, Harry Nilsson, Dion, Darlene Love, Leonard Cohen, and the John Lennon *Rock 'N' Roll* 1973 sessions in Los Angeles, alongside Russell.

Photo: Harold Sherrick ©Cave Hollywood



Dan Kessel, Kim Fowley, David Kessel

David had childhood studio experiences watching Russell and other musicians in Gold Star studio 1962-1966 visits that he and brother Dan attended.

“Have the boys come on over,” suggested Leon.

Dan, David, and Blake Xolton arrived and subsequently did a cover of Jan & Arnie's 1958 record "Gas Money" at his studio.

"It was groovy seeing Leon. Two old school cats," mused David Kessel in a February 2023 telephone conversation.

"Phil [Spector] and Leon were good friends. They had a longtime running joke that Leon was in on that I heard as a kid where Leon walked to the piano, he had a limp leg, and Phil would say. 'You really have a leg up on all the musicians in the room.' It was all in good nature.

"Dan and I once went to Shelter Records in 1975 to pitch our songs, including 'Baby Hold On,' to Leon and Denny Cordell after we did a mass mailing of recordings to them when their label was in Hollywood.

"We recorded 'Baby Hold On' as the Stars in the Sky and the Milk Way Band in 1976. It was later covered by Gangsters of Love, Teenager in 1977, and Jo-El Sonnier in 1987.

"My dad played rhythm guitar on 'Mr. Tambourine Man' at Columbia Studios on Sunset Blvd. He wasn't listed on the AFM union contract."

Richie Unterberger mentioned Barney on the seminal date in his book *Turn! Turn! Turn! The '60s Folk-Rock Revolution, and Byrds' bass player Chris Hillman wrote about seeing Kessel at the session in his own autobiography Time Between: My Life as a Byrd, Burrito Brother, and Beyond.*

. [Drummer Hal Blaine, Leon Russell, Larry Knechtel on bass, and guitarist Jerry Cole were the studio group on *Mr. Tambourine Man*, with the Byrds' Roger, [then Jim] McGuinn, David Crosby and Gene Clark].

Barney Kessel wasn't included in Janovitz's reporting.

"We first rejected 'Mr. Tambourine Man,'" divulged Chris Hillman in a 2016 interview with me. "Mind you, I was the bass player and not a pivotal member. I was the kid who played the bass and a member of the band. Initially all five of us didn't like what we heard on the Bob Dylan demo with Ramblin' Jack Elliot. We were lucky. And Bob had written it like a country song. [Co-manager/first Byrds record producer] Jim Dickson said, 'Listen to the lyrics.' And then it finally got through to us and credit to McGuinn, mainly Jim (later Roger) arranged into a danceable bat.

"I'm not a big fan of the Wrecking Crew's track of 'Mr. Tambourine Man.' It's way too slick for me. Yes, we probably could have cut it. I don't know if we would have had the success. And I understand completely from a business sense why Columbia and [record producer] Terry [Melcher] brought in good session guys to cut a good track. Let's hedge our bets here and let's get this thing and get it as best we can. That's fine."

"Barney," continued David Kessel, "is the guitarist/arranger and supervising producer on Julie London's hit 1955 record 'Cry Me a River' from her album *Julie is Her Name*. Ray Leatherwood is the bass player. No

drummer, which was at the time extremely rare and it featured his unique chordal approach. It was originally cut at the end of a session with less than an hour left on the clock. It sold a million copies.

“In 1970 when I heard Leon’s arrangement and his rockin’ version with Joe Cocker on Mad Dogs and Englishmen, I was blown away.”

Music internet pioneer David Kessel in 1995 formed Offline Records, a division of his IUMA (Internet Underground Music Archive), the first company to download music files. Kessel and company built the initial music websites for Warner Bros. Records and Madonna’s 4AD Records.

David’s step-mother was the well-regarded background singer and vocal contractor, B.J. (Betty Jane) Baker who sang on hit recordings of Bobby Darin, Jackie Wilson, Lloyd Price, Sam Cooke, the Righteous Brothers, Elvis Presley, the Ronettes, Sonny & Cher, the Anita Kerr Singers, Dean Martin, Frank Sinatra and Nancy Sinatra.



BJ Baker Photo: ©Cave Hollywood

Baker is heard on Fowley/Paxton's 1960 production of the Hollywood Argyles' "Alley-Oop." Hal Blaine gave her the nickname "Diamond Lil." B.J. Baker was married to the Muskogee, Oklahoma-born Barney Kessel from 1961-1980.

"Kim met my father when he was a teenager at Larry Williams' 1957 'Bony Maronie' recording session where he was hired on guitar," stated David.

"Kim had been up at Specialty Records in 1957 and saw Sonny Bono doing A&R for the label and met Larry Williams. Kim went to Verve Records in 1957 when Barney headed A&R for the jazz-centric label 1956-1960.

"Kim rode his bicycle into the Beverly Hills office pitching a concept of 'garage and doo-wop.' Norman Granz who owned Verve asked him to 'get out of our office!'"

"We [brother Dan] hung out a lot with Kim, even while working full time with Phil Spector and producing our own records. Kim was serious about the business side of music, but he also told us not to take the music so seriously and to lighten up and 'have fun along the way.' We learned his spontaneous approach to writing songs. He would write a cool song on the spot.

"During 1978, Kim said to me and my brother 'Hey, why don't you guys produce me for your label, that could be cool.' The album never was released, and is finally coming out last quarter of 2023! It's called *Times Have Changed*.

"I love Kim, he was always a huge supporter of ours and always seemed to be at least two steps ahead of everyone. Kim always made me laugh and was fun to be around."

“Dan and I once did a pre-production meeting with Darlene Love on ‘Lord If You’re a Woman’ at Phil’s mansion. He was at the piano and us on guitars. It was recorded at Gold Star in 1975. Darlene really loved Leon’s playing and mentioned he played piano once at her father’s church in L.A.”

In 1978, guitarists Dan, David, along with Shelter Records recording artist Phil Seymour of the Dwight Twilley Band, Rodney Bingenheimer and I handclapped on the Paley Brothers’ “Baby, Let’s Stick Together, produced by Spector at Gold Star. It’s the last track on the Paley Brothers *The Complete Recordings* and represents the final Spector session with several core members of the Wrecking Crew.



Dan Kessel, Phil Spector, David Kessel, Paul Body
Photo: Harold Sherrick ©Cave Hollywood

In 1982, I brought X's Exene Cervenka into Gold Star, producing a reading of her poem, "Percy Mayfield," later displayed in a rockumentary, *X: The Unheard Music*.

“I can't drive through the intersection at Santa Monica and Vine where Gold Star was located without feeling the curious force of time, the pixie dust thrill of pop music, the heartbeat of our tangled city throbbing in monophonic ecstasy on the AM dial,” encapsulated writer Daniel Weizmann in 2023.



Photo by: Ron Furmanek

“I’m not a musician, never have been. and yet I can never seem to make that turn without surging into fantasies about what it must have been like to be a Hal Blaine or a Carol Kaye rolling up to work at twilight in a big boat of a

convertible automobile, instruments in the trunk, ready for action.

"Never mind the wretched mini-mall, the faceless Starbucks across from the Army Surplus store, the Mobil station with its TV screen pumps and blinking neon-orange prices--the dreary present doesn't stand a chance! Like Francesca Lia Block's *Weetzie Bat* marveling at Marilyn's footprints at Grauman's, I slip into a hypnotic dream state making this turn, who wouldn't? 'Grazin' in the Grass' was recorded here. Driving was *invented* here. And we're still cruising, long after the parade's gone by, but the Divine Presence will always be here, right here at 6252 Santa Monica Boulevard, and nobody can convince me otherwise."

I witnessed the renewed working relationship Kim and Leon had inside Russell's Paradise universe stemming from their joint foundational roots planted at the Gold Star tree.

I appreciated the hospitality Leon provided to Kim at his Paradise studio for known and emerging musical, literary and still active talents, ill-served in Bill Janovitz's illuminating exploration of Russell.

A Leon Russell and Kim Fowley composition from *Americana*, "Jesus on my Side," concluded Kim Fowley's January 2015 funeral at the Hollywood Forever Cemetery located at 6000 Santa Monica Boulevard.

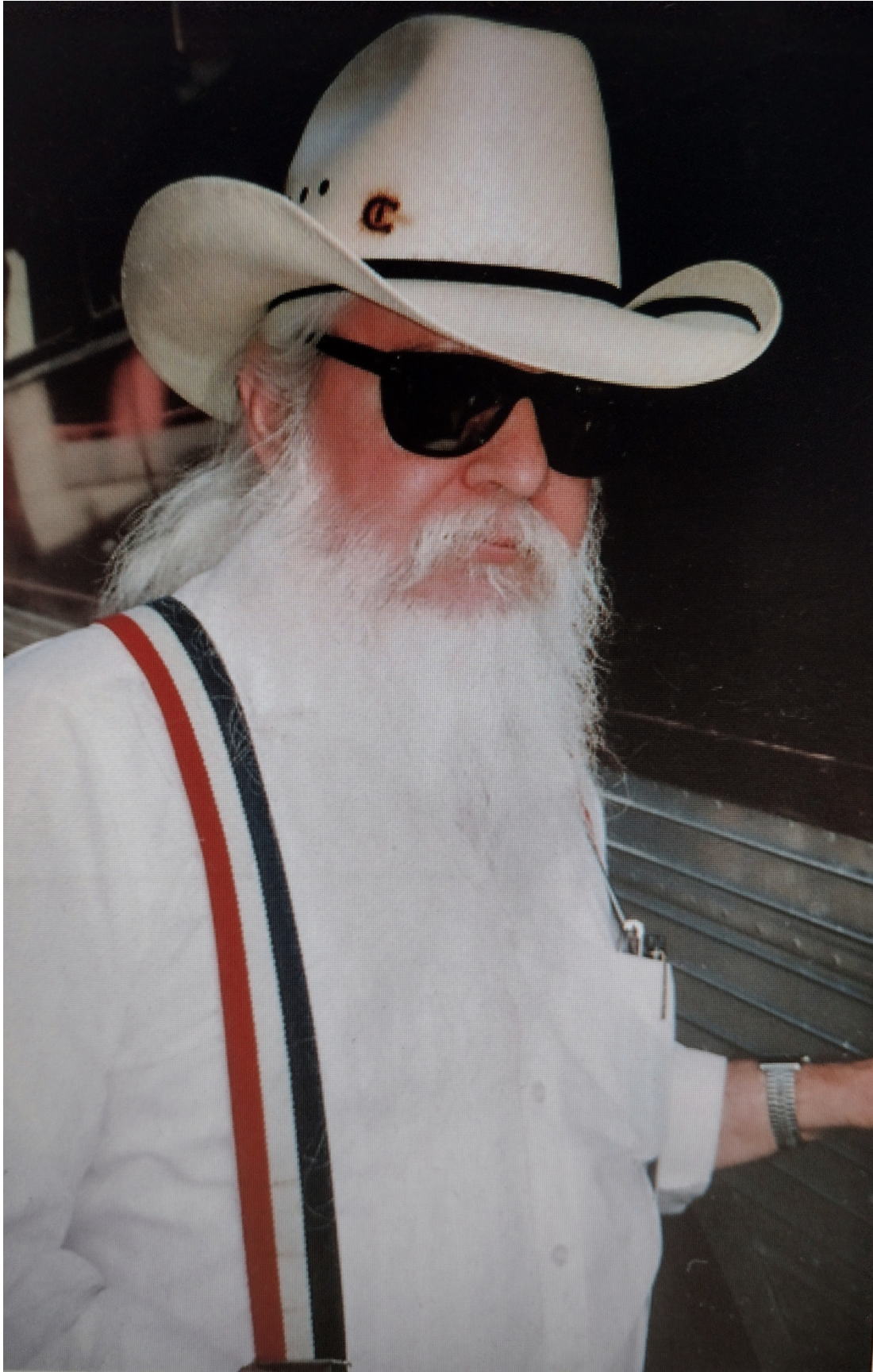


Photo: Jim Roup

“Artists like Leon Russell just happen,” summarized Michael MacDonald.

“As one of the high priests of Americana, Russell was the busy session musician who morphed into an idiosyncratic front man and bandleader. Beyond that he took the driver’s seat for Joe Cocker’s Mad Dogs and Englishmen, founded the Shelter label, was an integral part of the Wrecking Crew and, as a songwriter, penned several songs that have since become standards. ‘A Song For You,’ ‘This Masquerade’ and ‘Superstar’ should have established Russell as a kind of roots rock Hoagy Carmichael.

“A Native of Oklahoma, Russell was one of the first Okie musicians who made the Steinbeckian trek to California in the 1960s. A pianist well-schooled in R&B, Rockabilly and Gospel, Russell made his presence felt as a studio player and arranger. An early example of Russell’s genius can be heard in Gene Clark’s *Echoes* – Russell’s arrangement and orchestration lifts Clark’s lyrically deep composition into a Baroque masterpiece.

“As a solo artist, Russell sounded like no one other than himself. A raspy Okie drawl and a pounding Gospel informed piano made up an intoxicating mix and, for a period in the early 70s, Russell was remarkably ubiquitous.

“By the late 1980s, he’d scaled back to the point of near invisibility but he was not altogether forgotten. Admirer Bruce Hornsby pulled Russell out of the wilderness in 1992 by producing *Anything Can Happen*, his first album in a decade. For whatever reasons, the album didn’t quite catapult Russell back into the mainstream.

“However, the real restoration came in 2010, when Elton John, a self-confessed fan from way back, joined forces with Russell to deliver the T Bone Burnett produced *The Union*. Apart from revealing how much of an influence Russell had on John, *The Union* was a demonstrative reminder of what Russell brought and could bring to American music. It was good to have him back.”

When Elton John heard the news about Russell’s physical departure, he immediately took to Twitter to comment on his musical hero.

“My darling Leon Russell passed away last night. He was a mentor, inspiration and so kind to me. Thank God we caught up with each other and made *The Union*. He got his reputation back and felt fulfilled. I loved him and always will.” #LeonRussell #RIP #TheHandsOfAngels.

In September 2023, Hachette Books, who published *Leon Russell: The Master of Space and Time’s Journey Through Rock & Roll History*, will publish Bernie

Taupin's own book, *Scattershot: Life, Music, Elton and Me*.

If you really dig Leon Russell, may I recommend seeking out a copy of a live album from the Omnivore Entertainment Group distributed earlier this century. Nine galvanizing selections from a 1973 Russell concert at the Budokhan in Japan, coupled with bonus tracks added to the CD release from a memorable 1971 show from Houston, Texas.



Courtesy of UMe

My own interviews in 1988 with Jack Nitzsche for *Goldmine* magazine, and George Harrison in 1997 for *Music Connection* magazine were implemented and properly cited in Janovitz's text. My book *Turn Up The Radio! Pop, Rock and Roll in Los Angeles 1956-1972* is

referenced, but my last name was spelled wrong in a listing.

In December 2021, Harvey Kubernik was interviewed and served as a consultant on the Ron Chapman-directed *Revival69: The Concert That Rocked The World* about the 1969 festival held in Toronto, Canada featuring the debut of the John Lennon and Yoko Ono Plastic Ono Band. Chapman interviewed Klaus Voorman, Shep Gordon, Alice Cooper, Robby Krieger, Danny Serrafine, promoter John Brower, Rodney Bingenheimer, and Geddy Lee of Rush. Pennebaker/Hegedus Films is executive producer. The movie is an official 2023 SWSW selection in Austin, Texas and was screened March 12th and 16th at the Zach Theatre.

In 2023, Harvey, photographer Henry Diltz and authors Eddie Fiegel, Barney Hoskyns and Chris Campion were filmed by French director France Swimberge for her *Mamas & Papas* documentary. Broadcast scheduled on the European arts television channel, Arte. Kubernik is serving as consultant for the film.

During 2010, Kubernik served as Consulting Producer on director Morgan Neville's Troubadours: The Rise of the Singer-Songwriter, Carole King/James Taylor.

In 2020, Harvey served as a consultant on the 2-part documentary *Laurel Canyon: A Place in Time* directed by

Alison Ellwood, Kubernik, Henry Diltz and Gary Strobl collaborated with ABC-TV in 2011 for their Emmy-winning one hour *Eye on L.A. Legends of Laurel Canyon*, hosted by Tina Malave.

Harvey Kubernik is the author of 20 books, including 2009's *Canyon Of Dreams: The Magic And The Music Of Laurel Canyon* and 2014's *Turn Up The Radio! Rock, Pop and Roll In Los Angeles 1956-1972*. Sterling/Barnes and Noble in 2018 published Harvey and Kenneth Kubernik's *The Story Of The Band: From Big Pink To The Last Waltz*. In 2021 they wrote *Jimi Hendrix: Voodoo Child* for Sterling/Barnes and Noble. Otherworld Cottage Industries in 2020 published Harvey's *Docs That Rock, Music That Matters*.

Kubernik's writings are in several book anthologies. Most notably, *The Rolling Stone Book Of The Beats* and *Drinking With Bukowski*. Harvey wrote the liner notes to the CD re-releases of Carole King's *Tapestry*, *The Essential Carole King*, Allen Ginsberg's *Kaddish*, *Elvis Presley The '68 Comeback Special*, *The Ramones' End of the Century* and *Big Brother & the Holding Company Captured Live at The Monterey International Pop Festival*.

During 2006 Harvey spoke at the special hearings initiated by The Library of Congress held in Hollywood, California, discussing archiving practices and audiotape preservation.

In 2017 Harvey Kubernik appeared at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in Cleveland, Ohio, as part of their Distinguished Speakers Series.

Kubernik's 1995 interview, Berry Gordy: A Conversation With Mr. Motown appears in The Pop, Rock & Soul Reader edited by David Brackett published in 2019 by Oxford University Press. The lineup includes LeRoi Jones, Johnny Otis, Ellen Willis, Nat Hentoff, Jerry Wexler, Jim Delehant, Ralph J. Gleason, Greil Marcus, and Cameron Crowe.

Harvey was lensed as an interview subject for the 2013 BBC-TV documentary on Bobby Womack *Across 110th Street*, directed by James Meycock. Bobby Womack, Ronnie Wood from the Rolling Stones, Regina Womack, Damon Albarn of Blur/the Gorillaz, and Antonio Vargas are spotlighted.

In 2019, Harvey was an on-screen interview subject for director Matt O'Casey on his BBC4-TV digital arts channel *Christine McVie, Fleetwood Mac's Songbird*. The cast includes Christine McVie, Stan Webb of Chicken Shack, Mick Fleetwood, Stevie Nicks, John McVie, Christine's family members, Heart's Nancy Wilson, Mike Campbell, and Neil Finn.

**“In his book *TURN UP THE RADIO!*
ROCK, POP, AND ROLL IN LOS
ANGELES 1956-1972, Harvey Kubernik is
our city of angels musical muse — he
takes us to the source. He is the source.
Our Thomas Paine with a back beat.”**

- ANDREW LOOG OLDHAM



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